

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS NEWSLETTER



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Summer 2011

If you are a veteran medically separated between 11 September 2001 and 31 December 2009, we want to make you aware of a program created by Congress as part of the Dignified Treatment of Wounded Warriors Act (signed into law 28 Jan 2009). Details of the Physical Disability Board of Review (PDBR) are as follows:

WHAT IS THE PDBR?

The Physical Disability Board of Review (PDBR) provides Veterans who were medically separated from their Military Service between September 11, 2001 and December 31, 2009, with the opportunity for review of their disability ratings to ensure fairness, consistency and accuracy. The PDBR was created by Congress as part of the Dignified Treatment of Wounded Warriors Act of 2008. Signed into law by President Bush on January 28, 2008, the PDBR began reviewing its first cases in June 2009.

WHO CAN APPLY TO THE PDBR?

To be eligible for PDBR review, a Veteran must have been medically separated between September 11, 2001 and December 31, 2009 with a combined disability rating of 20 percent or less, and not have been found eligible for retirement. Former reserve members with greater than 20 years of Total Federal Military Service yet with fewer than 20 years of Active Duty and who meet the criteria listed above are also eligible to apply. There are roughly 75,000 eligible Veterans who are eligible to apply to the PDBR under the stated criteria. As of July 2011, just over 2,500 Veterans have applied.

HOW DOES THE PDBR OPERATE?

The Department of Defense (DoD) designated the Air Force as the lead component to establish and operate the PDBR. The PDBR evaluates and reviews cases for all services (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Coast Guard) and their reserve components. Located in Arlington, VA, the PDBR is a true joint service board (and the only existing joint service disability evaluation and review board). Each case is jointly reviewed by representatives from three separate services (to include the service of the applicant). The PDBR examines each applicant's medical separation, compares DoD and Veteran's Administration (VA) ratings, and makes a recommendation to the respective Service Secretary (or their designee) as to whether or not the Secretary concerned should change a disability rating (which reflects a more accurate rating at the original time of separation) resulting in the Veteran's transfer to the Disability Retirement rolls. By law, the PDBR may not recommend a lower disability rating for any rating reviewed. All changes to disability ratings that are approved by the Service Secretary concerned will be backdated and effective the date of the original Physical Evaluation Board. The PDBR exclusively uses the Veterans Administration Schedule for Rating Disabilities (VASRD) as its adjudication guidance in reviewing unfitting conditions considered by the Disability Evaluation System [Medical Evaluation Board (MEB) and Physical Evaluation Board (PEB)]. If a particular condition was recognized and documented by the Service Department Disability Evaluation System, the PDBR will review it to ensure the Veteran was properly credited for physical ailments which may have caused the eventual medical separation of the Veteran. If a Veteran has a condition he/she feels should have been considered by his/her MEB or PEB, but it was not a part of his/her MEB or PEB, the avenue of redress is not through the PDBR; but instead through the Veteran's Board for Correction of Military/Naval Records (BCMR/NR).

Upon receipt of a Veteran's application, the PDBR will request copies of all applicable VA medical and rating documents as well as all Military Service Department Physical Evaluation Board related records, including the Veteran's Service Treatment Record (STR). The Veteran may submit any additional information pertinent to the request with his/her application. The review is records based only and no provision is made for a personal appearance by the Veteran or his/her representative.

WHY SHOULD I APPLY TO THE PDBR?

Since the PDBR began reviewing cases in June 2009, in more than 50% of cases, Veterans have had their original disability determination upgraded, resulting in a disability retirement for the Veteran. Although no guarantee of this re-characterization rate can be made going forward, it is a good indicator of the degree of success applicants have had with the board up until now. If a Veteran is awarded a disability retirement as a result of the review process, it may not result in any immediate monetary gain by the Veteran (previously awarded payments from the VA and DoD as related to the original disability must be recouped by the government, prior to new payments being made; but this recoupment is made from the new monthly disability annuity payments going forward). Regardless, from the time of disability retirement award, the Veteran becomes eligible for all retirement benefits normally awarded military department retirees (health care, exchange, commissary, travel, etc).

Information about the PDBR, how to apply, including links to the application form (DD Form 294) is available at the following website: <http://www.health.mil/pdbr>. —Jodi Tymeson, Executive Director, IDVA

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The New Greatest Generation



Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA), the nation's first and largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization representing veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, celebrated the release of a historic TIME cover story profiling IAVA Member Veterans as the new face of American leadership. Five IAVA Member Veterans, including Founder and Executive Director Paul Rieckhoff and Board Member Wes Moore, are featured in TIME's cover story *The New Greatest Generation* by columnist Joe Klein about how young war veterans are redefining leadership at home.

"This is an important moment for IAVA and all new veterans. "This is a recognition of not just us [IAVA] but all 2.3 million Iraq and Afghanistan veterans who represent a powerful and diverse new generation of American leaders." Author Joe Klein stated, "The returning veterans are bringing skills that seem to be on the wane in American society, qualities we really need now: crisp decision making, rigor, optimism, entrepreneurial creativity, a larger sense of purpose, and real patriotism."

Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America (www.IAVA.org) is the country's first and largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization for veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and has more than 200,000 Member Veterans and civilian supporters nationwide. Its mission is to improve the lives of this country's newest generation of veterans and their families.

[Source: <http://iava.org/press-room/press-releases/time-cover-story-features-iava-leaders>]

Iowa's Fallen Heroes

Capt. Matthew Gunnar Nielson, 27, a Jefferson, Iowa native, was killed June 29, 2011 during an indirect fire attack by insurgents while deployed to Badrah, Iraq for Operation New Dawn. Nielson was assigned to 2nd Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, U.S. Army, Fort Hood, Texas. Nielson and two other soldiers were killed in the attack.

Nielson was born February 1, 1984 and raised in Lincoln NE, Ogden, and Jefferson, Iowa. He was a student at the University of Northern Iowa where he graduated cum laude with a B.A. in History in 2008. After graduation, he received a commission into the U.S. Army as a second lieutenant through the UNI Reserve Officer Training Corps. His awards and decorations include the Bronze Star medal and the Purple Heart medal.

Nielson is survived by his mother and father, Christine and Roger Nielson of Jefferson; brothers Nathanael, Jakob, and Luke; and sisters Heather, Kirsten, Teddi, and Emily.



Capt. Matthew Nielson

Sgt. 1st Class Terryl Pasker, 39, an Anamosa, Iowa native, was killed July 9, 2011 by a rogue Afghan soldier in eastern Afghanistan. An American civilian contractor was also killed. Pasker served with Company B, 334th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division. He received the Bronze Star and Purple Heart for his sacrifice.

In civilian life Pasker was a carpenter who owned a contracting business. He enlisted in the Army in 1990 and joined the National Guard in 1995. He previously served in Afghanistan in 2004 and 2005.

Pasker was one of an elite number of Iowa Guard troops who were mentoring Afghan police and army leaders in Panjshir Province. Pasker's role was to maintain electronic equipment.

Pasker is survived by his wife Erica; his parents, Mary and David Pasker of Blairstown; brother Andrew Pasker; sisters Christine Ross and Rebecca Southard; and grandparents William and Rosemary Pasker.



Sgt. Terryl Pasker

Petty Officer 1st Class Jon Tumilson, 35, a U.S. Navy SEAL/Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist from Rockford, Iowa, was among 30 Americans who were killed in action August 6, 2011 when a Taliban rocket-propelled grenade shot down their helicopter. It was the most deadly loss for American forces in the decade-old war. Tumilson was posthumously awarded the Purple Heart and Defense Meritorious Service medal.

The Associated Press reported that most of the 30 Americans who died in the helicopter crash served in the same elite Navy SEALs unit that killed Osama bin Laden. Seven Afghan commandos were also killed when the helicopter was shot down.

Tumilson was a 1995 graduate of Rockford High School in Rockford, a Floyd County town of about 860 people near Mason City.

Tumilson is survived by his parents George and Kathleen Tumilson and two sisters, Joy McMeekan and Kristie Pohlman.



Navy SEAL Jon Tumilson

In Remembrance

Robert Briggs, 42, of Hillsboro, Iowa, formerly of Keokuk, Iowa, died June 28, 2011 from injuries received on April 16, 2005 while serving his country in Iraq – for which he received the Purple Heart. Bob was a member of the National Guard from 1991 to 2007 and a member of the 224th Engineer Battalion sent to the Sunni Triangle region, where one of their assignments was to search for roadside bombs. He suffered severe head wounds when a rocket exploded a few feet from him, hurling shrapnel into his head.



Robert Briggs

Bob was an inspiration to other veterans suffering from severe head wounds. His wife, Michelle became a strong, dedicated, and persistent advocate for Bob and other veterans, and stood up for the benefits she thought they deserved. Michelle Briggs stated that they spent hours and traveled extensively to “bring about the necessary changes to legislation on both the local and federal level in support of veterans. Both were instrumental in the development of the recently passed *Caregiver Bill* and the passing of IDVA’s *Iowa Injured Veterans Grant* of which Bob was very proud.” He was also the vice-president of *English River Outfitters* in Washington, Iowa – an organization that offers “a safe outdoor experience with other veterans to help promote healing and closure at no cost to the veterans.”

Bob and Michelle were also members of the 2010 Iowa Veterans Mental Health Task Force, a group convened to identify “critical issues and barriers within the veterans’ mental health and substance abuse systems and to develop recommendations to improve behavioral health services to Iowa veterans.” Members of the Task Force were grateful for the Briggs’ dedicated advocacy for veterans. The Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs was proud to have known Robert Briggs; we know that his passions, including his dedication to other injured veterans, will be carried forward by his family and friends.

Iowa WWII Aviator Returns Home 66 Years Later

Sixty-six years after leaving Amendola, Italy with a B-17 “Flying Fortress” on a bombing mission bound for Berlin, Germany, Staff Sgt. Marvin J. “Steiney” Steinfeld came home to Iowa. Steinfeld, a 22-year old toggelier from Keystone, Iowa, disappeared between Soviet and German lines in Hungary on March 24, 1945 after bailing out of a B-17 aircraft damaged by German anti-aircraft fire. Governor Terry Branstad ordered all flags in Iowa to be flown at half-staff on Tuesday, June 21, 2011 in honor of Staff Sgt. Steinfeld.

On November 16, 2004, Hungarian authorities notified the United State Defense Attaché in Budapest that the potential remains of an American serviceman had been discovered in the city of Zirc, Hungary – including a set of identification tags that bore Steinfeld’s name.

In February 2008, after failed negotiation attempts in 2005 and 2007, Lt. Gen. Jozef Hollo, Director General of the Hungarian Institute and Museum of History, was informed by the Interdepartmental Committee of the Missing and Deported POWs of the Russian Federation that approval had been given to exhume the grave site. The actual work began July 21, 2009, some 64 years after Steinfeld’s disappearance. Within several days, the Department of Defense’s Joint POW/MIA Representatives from JPAC confirmed the positive identification of Steinfeld’s remains to the Steinfeld family.

Marvin J. Steinfeld was born August 29, 1922, the youngest son of Herman and Henrietta (Pohlman) Steinfeld. He grew up in Keystone, Iowa and enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps on October 31, 1942. In December 1944 he deployed overseas and was assigned to the 429th Bombardment Squadron, 2nd Bombardment Group, 15th U.S. Air Force.

Steinfeld married Rosella M. Behrends on October 21, 1943, and had one daughter. He is survived by his daughter, Carol Ann (Steinfeld) Sansenbach, four grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren and one step-great-grandchild, as well as several cousins. [Source: COL Gregory Hapgood, Iowa National Guard]

Iowa Veterans Cemetery

News and Updates

Knights of Columbus members — Vern Heithoff, Dennis Hagedorn, and Rodger Till and other KOC members join the IVC crew once a week to help with mowing. At the beginning of the mowing season they were needed nearly twice a week because of the huge amounts of rain, but the heat in July/August have slowed down growth. KOC's volunteer work is always greatly appreciated!



Vern Heithoff hard at work at IVC



Jodi Tymeson & Frank Salvas

Mr. Frank Salvas, Director of the National Cemetery Administration, State Cemetery Grant Program, visited the Iowa Veterans Cemetery on July 28, 2011. Mr. Salvas and Director Tymeson had the opportunity to visit about future needs of the Cemetery.

The following is from the VA website: "The VA's Veterans Cemetery Grant Program is designed to complement VA's 131 national cemeteries across the country. The Veterans Cemetery Grants Program helps states, federally recognized tribal governments, or U.S. Territories establish new Veterans cemeteries, expand, or improve existing veterans cemeteries. To date, the VA program has helped establish, expand, or improve 79 state Veterans cemeteries in 38 states and territories to include Northern Mariana Islands, and Guam, which provided nearly 28,000 burials in fiscal year 2010. VA has awarded grants totaling more than \$438 million."

The Iowa Veterans Cemetery reports that through August 9, 2011 there are:
Applications on file: over 5131 ♦ Veterans interred: 765 ♦ Interments: 917 ♦ *In Memory of Markers*: 27

Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs

The Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs and the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs are pleased to report the appointment of Lieutenant Colonel Todd Jacobus as Chairman of the Iowa Commission of Veterans Affairs. Todd was originally appointed to the Commission by Governor Culver for the period 1/8/09 to 4/30/2010. He was reappointed in 5/1/2010; his current term will end 4/30/2014.

Lieutenant Colonel Jacobus not only represents the National Guard on the



Lieutenant Colonel Todd Jacobus

Commission, but is also the first member to be a veteran of the Iraq/Afghanistan Wars. He enlisted in the United States Army Reserve in 1984 while he was a junior in high school, and has served in the Iowa Army National Guard since 1988. He serves as the full-time officer in charge of the Iowa Army National Guard Installations Component at Camp Dodge, Johnston; he also serves as the Executive Officer of the 67th Troop Command in Iowa City.

Upcoming Events

Korean War 60th Reunion

A Korean War 60th year reunion will be held at the Comfort Suites at Living History Farms on August 27-28, 2011. This will mark their 25th reunion. New members are welcomed to join the group! For more information, contact: Bob Fraune — Waterloo, IA: 319.23.-2330 or Francis Erpelding — Burt, IA 515.924.289.



Homeless Veterans Stand Down

For: Veterans who are homeless or at risk of homelessness

When: Friday, September 9th, 2011 beginning at 5:00 p.m. through Sunday, September 11, 2011 ending at 1:00 p.m.

Where: State Capitol Grounds — East 13th and Walnut

For additional information, contact: Kimberly Neal, 515.669.5999 ext. 4036



Five Seasons Stand Down for Homeless and Near-Homeless

The Linn County Department of Veteran Affairs, in partnership with the Cedar Rapids Metro Area Veterans Council, the Iowa City VA Medical Center, and Continuum of Care, will hold Linn County's sixth annual Stand Down for homeless and near-homeless veterans and non-veterans Friday, September 9 at Veterans Memorial Stadium, 950 Rockford Road SW in Cedar Rapids, from 8 a.m. until 3 p.m.

The Five Seasons Stand Down helps homeless or near-homeless veterans and non-veterans transition to community living by providing access to human services agencies, including housing, employment assistance, health care, mental health and substance abuse treatment, VA and Social Security benefits counseling, clothing vouchers, and eye exams. Approximately 65 service agencies

will participate in this year's Stand Down and several of them will offer classes to Stand Down attendees.

Project Salute, a mobile law van from the University of Detroit, Mercy School of Law, is also scheduled to make a stop at this year's Stand Down.

"This is a community-wide, collaborative effort between local veterans' organizations and community agencies that serve the homeless," said Don Tyne, Director of Linn County Veteran Affairs and one of the Stand Down's organizers. "Our goal is to connect people — who are homeless or near-homeless — with services that will help them get back on their feet and become self-sufficient." For additional information, contact:

Ann Hearn
Deputy Director of Community Planning
Linn County Community Services
(319) 892-5609
ann.hearn@linncounty.org

Don Tyne
Director
Linn County Veteran Affairs
(319) 892-5160
veteran@linncounty.org



9/11 Memorial Service



A 9/11 Memorial Service will be held on 9/11/11 beginning at 7:30 a.m. on the State Capitol Grounds. The service will be approximately one hour and will include several speakers and honor guard members from local, county, state, and federal service agencies.

The United States of America has declared Patriot Day, 11 September 2011, a National Day of mourning with flags flown at half staff.

For more information, contact: Jessica Lown, Public Information Specialist, Iowa DPS, 515.725.6189, lown@dps.state.ia.us.

Upcoming Events Cont.

Remembrance Run

The 2nd annual **Remembrance Run** honoring Iowa's Fallen, will be held on Sunday, September 18, 2011. This 5K run/walk honors and remembers fallen service members from the state of Iowa. Also honored and welcomed home will be the soldiers of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division.

Registration is \$25 and includes the 5K run/walk, an event T-shirt, and lunch. Find them on Facebook: Iowa Remembers. Email: IowaRemembersInc@live.com. For additional information, go to: https://secure.getmeregistered.com/get_information.php?event_id=4240.



Waterloo Veteran Employment and Services Fairs

The Waterloo National Guard Armory will host the 5th annual Veteran Employment and Services Fair on September 14, 2011, from 1—4 p.m. The event is open to all veterans and their spouses. A few spaces remain for employers.

For more information, contact: Joan Koffler: Joan.Koffler@iwd.iowa.gov or 319.235.2123



Dignity Memorial™ Vietnam Wall Ceremony

SAVE the DATE: The Dignity Memorial® Vietnam Wall, a three-quarter-scale traveling replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., will be open for public viewing September 16 – 18 at Resthaven Cemetery, 801 19th Street in West Des Moines, Iowa. Call Terry Johnson or Cheryl TanCreti at 515-223-1230 or visit www.dmvietnamwall.com/desmoines for more information.



“All the Way Home” – Tri-State Veterans Conference

The 3rd “All The Way Home Conference/Standdown” in Dubuque is scheduled for Saturday, September 24, 2011, at the Five Flags Center, 405 Main Street, Dubuque, IA 562001.

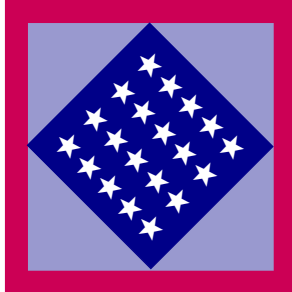
The conference will emphasize:

- ♦ Providing a forum for veterans and their families to access services available in Dubuque and the surrounding area;
- ♦ Making these services available in one place and thus the conference will empower veterans to seek and receive services intended for them and their families;
- ♦ Providing an appropriate forum for the Dubuque community to thank veterans for their service.

The conference will coincide with the return of our National Guard Troops. For additional information, contact Glen Gassman, Iowa Workforce Development, 563.589.7840, glen.gassman@iwd.iowa.gov, or visit: <http://allthewayhomeconference.com>.

Upcoming Events Cont.

4th Annual AQS Quilt Show & Contest



The AQS Quilt Show and Contest is coming to Des Moines on September 28 – October 1, 2011. As part of their show this year, they will be featuring a display of quilts from the collection of Sue Reich that are a tribute to World War II veterans.

In honor of the display and of veterans, the Des Moines Quilter's Guild is making 175–180 quilts to donate to the VA Hospital in Des Moines. Some of these quilts will also be on display. Veterans are urged and welcomed to attend the show. Special group/private viewing is possible.

For more information, contact Amy Loftus, Marketing Coordinator, Iowa Events Center 515.564.8059 or aloftus@iowaeventscenter.com



Hiring Our Heroes

A **Hiring Our Heroes** event will be held in Des Moines on November 8, 2011 at Hy-Vee Hall in downtown Des Moines. The hiring event for veterans is being held by the United States Chamber of Commerce, along with the Greater Des Moines Partnership, and IowaWorks.

Hiring Our Heroes is unique for veterans: employers hope to *hire veterans at the event, rather than collecting resumes to make hiring decisions later*. Veterans and their spouses seeking employment are advised to arrive early and bring about 20 resumes and copies of their military discharge and commendation documents.

Hiring Our Heroes is the result of a partnership between the Department of Labor – Veterans Employment and Training Service (DOL-VETS) and the U.S. Chamber, which launched a 14-state program in October 2010 to help veterans find meaningful employment after separating from the service. More info: Jeffrey.Johnson@iwd.iowa.gov



News Briefs

Guard/Reserve Employers Earn Top Defense Department Honor

Officials at *Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve*, a DoD agency, announced the 15 recipients of the department's highest recognition for employers, noting that they stood out from a field of 4,049 nominations submitted by Guard and Reserve service members or their families. Fifteen employers were chosen to receive the 2011 Secretary of Defense *Employer Support Freedom* award in recognition of the support they provide to their employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserve. Iowa's Principal Financial Group had the honor of being one of those fifteen chosen.

Principal was nominated by Kerry Studer, assistant managing director, Principal Real Estate Investors, and Army Reservist. In his nomination, Studer said his coworkers became additional parent figures in his absence, accompanying his wife and children to school and sporting events. Principal also adopted the unit of their deployed service member, purchasing 300 sets of PT uniforms and 600 t-shirts, and mailing countless care packages. [Source: www.principal.com/about/news/2011/crp-esgr-freedom-award060211.htm]

The Freedom Award is the DoD's *highest* recognition given to employers for exceptional support of their employees serving in the Guard and Reserve. Congratulations!

News Briefs Cont.

Washington Group Named Developers of Knoxville VA Campus

James Washington and his organization, the *Knoxville Veterans Growth Alliance*, have been selected as the developers of the former Knoxville VA Hospital and campus. Washington is a past President of the Knoxville Chamber of Commerce and owns Knoxville Manufacturing.

VA officials have stated that they hope Washington's group will be able to make a timely transition by the first of the year. VA officials have also said that they will continue to serve their patients in Knoxville, and that they are proceeding with a outpatient clinic located elsewhere in the community. [Source: Pella Chamber of Commerce]

New Military Iowa License Plates

Seven new specialty license plates were approved by the 2011 Iowa legislative session. They are:

- Air Force Combat Action Medal
- Civil War Sesquicentennial
- Combat Action Badge
- Combat Action Ribbon U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Marine Corps/U.S. Navy
- Combat Infantryman Badge
- Combat Medical Badge
- Fallen Peace Officers



Civil War Sesquicentennial Plate

Before any of the new seven plates can be applied for or manufactured, the following requirements must be met:

Each plate must have 250 start-up orders requesting a plate type accompanied by a \$20 processing fee. The plates will not be available and cannot be applied for until the required 250 start-up orders have been received, and then applied for at a cost of \$25 for numbered plates.

Applications for the start-up orders can be obtained online at :

<http://www.iowadot.gov/mvd/ovs/newPlates2011.html>; by calling the Office of Vehicle Services at 515-237-3110; by faxing a request to 515-237-3056; or by e-mailing: vehser@dot.iowa.gov.

Iowa National Guard and Workforce Development Announce Partnership

The Iowa National Guard and Iowa Workforce Development have announced a partnership to bring workforce services directly to Iowa veterans with Workforce access points throughout the armory system. Maj. Gen. Tim Orr, the Adjutant General of the Iowa National Guard stated, "We're honored to partner with Iowa Workforce Development... More than 25 percent of our 3,000 Soldiers and Airmen returning from combat in Afghanistan are seeking full-time employment. Through the focused efforts of Iowa Workforce Development, our men and women will greatly enhance their career opportunities and employability, putting their unique skillsets to work in Iowa's communities."

Iowa's workforce system is continually being enhanced through the addition of Access Points. The National Guard partnership will add 42 new access point locations for veterans. Services available through the access points include job search and résumé assistance; unemployment claims and labor market information; educational and veteran specific resources; access to workforce specialists via live chat; and more.

News Briefs Cont.

Veterans Outreach Center

VA Central Iowa has consolidated the Veterans Outreach staff into one offsite location that provides services to homeless veterans. The Veterans Outreach Center is one part of a complete VA mission to end homelessness among veterans by the year 2015. The new center serves all homeless veterans.

For more information or eligibility questions, contact the Veterans Outreach Center at 515-699-5637. To register or enroll for health care:

In person: Building 1, Room 117, Des Moines VA Medical Center

By mail: call 515-699-5888 for a registration packet.

Online: <https://www.1010ez.med.va.gov/sec/vha/1010ez>

Veterans Outreach Center

1223 Center Street, Suite 17
Des Moines, IA 50309
515-699-5999 OR 800-294-8387

Services include:

- Case Management & Referral
- Laundry Facilities
- Internet Access
- Mail Storage & Retrieval
- Showers
- Local Phone Use
- Limited Copying & Printing
- Hygiene Supplies



2011 Legislative Session

June 30th marked the 172nd day and the end of the 2011 Session of the 84th General Assembly of Iowa – the third longest in Iowa history. Below is the 2011 Legislative Session update:

HF 474 An act to designate August 7 of each year as Purple Heart Day.

SF 397 An act creating a criminal offense for impersonating a decorated military veteran and providing penalties; considered a serious misdemeanor.

SF 399 An act regulating the advertising of veteran benefits appeal services by requiring certain disclosures and including a civil penalty; not to exceed \$1,000 per violation. Persons advertising services to represent or assist veterans in appealing a denial of veterans benefits shall conspicuously disclose in the advertisement, in similar type size or voice-over, that appeal services are also offered at no cost by county commissions of veterans affairs offices as maintained pursuant to section 35B.6. Any civil penalty recovered shall be deposited in the veterans trust fund created in section 35A.13.

SF 402 An act relating to the injured veterans grant program; allows grant for subsequent, unrelated injuries that meet the requirements of the program.

HF 652 An act providing an exemption from the computation of the individual state income tax of all pay received for active duty military service and service in Operation New Dawn; exempts active duty pay from state income tax after January 1, 2003.

HF 651 An act providing for a special Civil War Sesquicentennial license plate, special fallen peace officer plate, and special military combat plates; combat infantryman badge, combat action badge, combat action ribbon, air force combat action medal, and combat medical badge. (250 must be ordered with a \$20 processing fee.)

HF 363 An act relating to the duties and rulemaking authority of the commission on veterans affairs; the department shall submit proposed rules to the commission for review and approval pursuant to the requirements of section 35A.3. Commission will review and approve, prior to adoption, all proposed rules submitted by the department concerning the management and operation of the department and programs administered by the department.

HF 364 An act relating to veterans records managed by the department of veterans affairs. Upon receipt of certificate of release or discharge from active duty, create a roster of information. Within 30 days of receipt of the certificate, provide a copy of the roster to the county VA listed on the roster.

HF 195 An act relating to assignment of physical care parenting time for children of military service members on active duty; can temporarily assign physical care parenting time to another family member of the minor child; does not grant custodial or parental rights to any person not the child's parent.

News Briefs Cont.

150th Anniversary of 1st Bn 168th Infantry (Iowa National Guard)

The 150th anniversary of Iowa National Guard Unit 1st Battalion, 168th Infantry was held at the historic General Dodge House on August 8, 2011 in Council Bluffs.

The 1st Battalion, 168th Infantry was originally organized by Col. Grenville Dodge as the 4th Regiment, Iowa Volunteer Infantry and mustered into federal service on August 8, 1861 at Camp Kirkwood, located just south of

what is now Council Bluffs. The 4th Regiment was originally organized into 10 companies: Company A (Mills County) B (Pottawattamie, Harrison, Cass and Shelby Counties); C (Guthrie and Dallas Counties); D (Decatur and Clarke Counties); E (Polk, Warren and Dallas Counties); F (Madison and Warren Counties); G (Ringgold County); H (Adams and Union Counties); I (Wayne County); and K (Taylor and Page Counties).

The regiment engaged in Civil War campaigns at Pea Ridge, Vicksburg, Chattanooga, Atlanta, and various locations in Arkansas, Alabama, North Carolina and South Carolina, and was mustered out of federal service on July 24, 1865, in Louisville, Kentucky.

The unit was again activated for federal service May 30, 1898 at Des Moines; fought in the Philippine Insurrection and was then mustered out of federal service November 2, 1899 in San Francisco, California.

The 168th Infantry next saw service in World War I, mustering into federal service June 26, 1916 at Camp Dodge, Johnston, Iowa. Following combat in France in the Champagne-Marne, Aisne-Marne, St. Mihiel, Meuse-Argonne, Lorraine and Champagne campaigns, the unit was mustered out of federal service on February 20, 1917 at Des Moines.

As World War II dawned, the unit was again inducted into federal service on February 10, 1941, fighting in Algeria-French Morocco and Tunisia, then combat in the Italian campaign at Naples-Foggia, Anzio, Rome-Arno,

the North Apennines and Po Valley. The unit was mustered out of federal service on November 3, 1945 at Camp Henry, Virginia.

The 1st Battalion, 168th Infantry began the first of two Afghanistan deployments after they were ordered into active federal service March 5, 2004 and released on Sept. 1, 2005. They were again deployed to Afghanistan, mobilizing in July 2010 with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division as part of the Iowa National Guard's largest call-up since World War II. The unit returned home to Iowa in July 2011.

Today, the 1st Battalion, 168th Infantry is comprised of the following units (unit locations in parentheses): Headquarters and Headquarters Company (Council Bluffs, Johnston, and Spencer); Company A (Carroll, Boone, and Storm Lake); Company B (Shenandoah, Council Bluffs, and Corning); Company C (Johnston and Newton); Company D (Denison); and Com-

pany F, 334th Brigade Support Battalion (Red Oak and Council Bluffs).

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For more information about the history of this unit, visit: <http://iagenweb.org/civilwar/books/logan.htm> and <http://www.armysw.com/fourthia/4thlavolinf%20history.pdf>.



Colonel Grenville Dodge

News Briefs Cont.

DAS Oversees Repairs for Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument

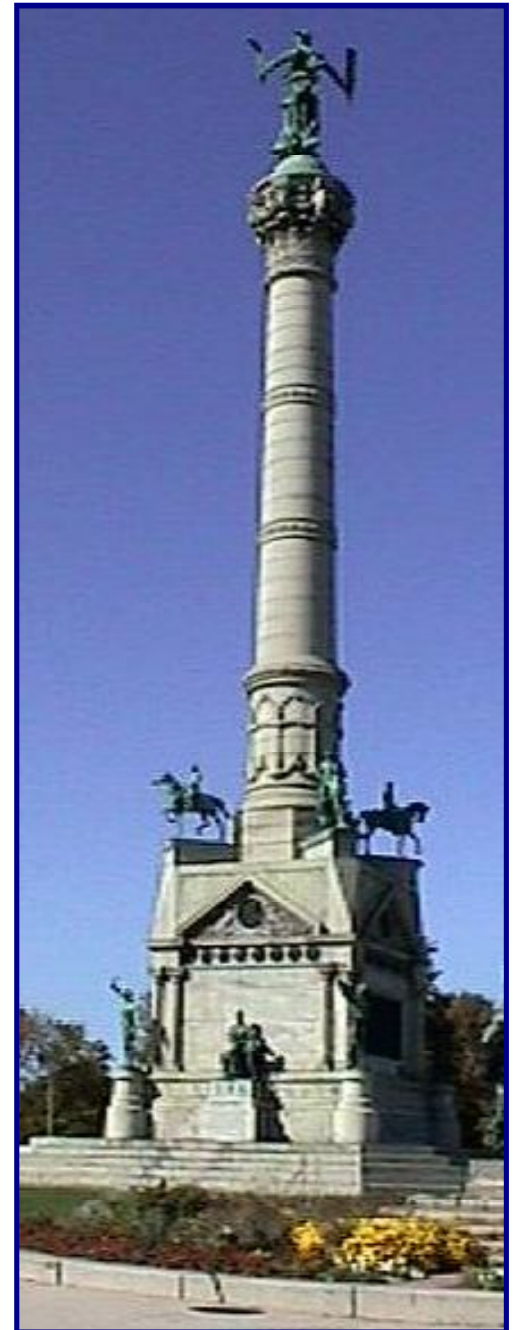
The State of Iowa's Soldiers' and Sailors' monument was funded partially by refunded war taxes, to commemorate lowans who fought during the Civil War. The monument was approved in 1888, the cornerstone was laid in 1894, and the structure was completed two years later. Because a controversy developed over the location and artistic details of the monument, nearly 50 years passed before its dedication in 1945. Nearly 80,000 Civil War military men were from Iowa, *the largest number of soldiers per capita of any state* participating during the war.

Iowa artist Harriet A. Ketcham's design for the memorial was chosen over 47 others, although she died before the monument was completed. Both real and symbolic figures are portrayed. "Victory" is the most prominent figure, topping the 135-foot structure. Four equestrians — all Iowa Civil War generals — are depicted: Marcellus M. Crocker, who joined Grant at the siege of Vicksburg; Grenville M. Dodge, who built railroads to support Grant's army and accompanied Sherman on the "March to the Sea;" Samuel R. Curtis, commander of the Union Army at Pea Ridge; and John M. Corse, who was promoted to brigadier general in 1863 and assigned to the command of the Fourth Division of the Fifteenth Army Corps.

The four soldiers depicted on the upper base represent lowans who served in different branches of the military during the Civil War: Infantryman Shelby Norman, who, at the age of 18, was the first lowan killed in battle; Ensign William H.C. Michael, a school teacher turned sailor; artilleryman Captain Henry H. Griffiths, whose battery never lost a gun throughout the war; and cavalryman Lt. James Horton, killed while leading a saber charge at the battle of Lovejoy Station. Noted Iowa generals and battle scenes are pictured along the base. On the north side, a statue portrays Iowa as a mother offering nourishment to her children. To the south, "History" gazes into the future, and "Iowa" is shown as a youngster.

After more than a century of standing tall in recognition of those who served, the epic landmark is finally receiving some tender loving care through approximately \$160,000 of funding, including:

- Cleaning and re-pointing all of the mortar joints at the base of the column
- Cleaning and re-caulking of the granite steps
- Repair of brick support structure and replacement of missing bricks
- Regrading of the site to facilitate proper water drainage
- Resetting the infantryman on northeast corner
- Replacing granite above the bronze medallions
- Remove and reinstall granite patches
- Inject masonry bonding agent into cracks in granite



[Source: www.legis.state.ia.us/Pubinfo/Tour/grounds/grounds.htm] and July/August 2011 Customer Focus, DAS newsletter.

News Briefs Cont.

2011 Purple Heart Remembrance Ceremony

Iowa honored their recipients of the Purple Heart at a remembrance ceremony held Friday, August 5, 2011, at the Gold Star Museum, located at Camp Dodge in Johnston, Iowa.

The ceremony included special guest speakers Paula Dierenfeld, Mayor, City of Johnston; State Representative Chris Hagenow; and CMDR Larry Spencer (Ret). Lowell Lein, MOPH Chapter 1979, presented his book, "Purple Heart Day" – a tribute to Iowa's wounded and injured veterans of the Military of the Purple Heart – to the museum. IDVA director, Jodi Tymeson was on hand to read a proclamation recognizing August 7th of each year as Purple Heart Day in Iowa. Michael Vogt, Iowa Gold Star Museum curator, also spoke about the history of the Purple Heart.



...to encourage all government bodies in the state to observe the day in a manner that honors the sacrifice of those men and women who shed their blood and gave their lives in service to the United States of America.



August 7th was selected because on that day in 1782, General George Washington created the "Badge for Military Merit," a purple, heart-shaped piece of silk, edged with silver binding. The badge was presented to soldiers for "any singularly meritorious action." On the bicentennial of Washington's birth, February 22, 1932, the U.S. War Department announced the creation of the "Order of the Purple Heart." The Purple Heart now displays a bust of Washington and his coat of arms.



Twenty-two Purple Heart recipients attended the first Purple Heart Remembrance Ceremony at the Gold Star Museum



In Purple Heart Medal, Researchers Seek Clues to Combat Stress Resilience & Longer Life

A study led by Department of Veterans Affairs researchers found that aging Veterans who earned the Purple Heart show decreased mortality compared with those who had not earned the medal. Additionally, those war-wounded Veterans who survive into later life – especially those who do not develop posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) – may provide valuable clues as to the factors that lead to resilience to combat stress.

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News Briefs Cont.

Purple Heart continued from page 13

A team of researchers who studied more than 10,000 veterans of World War II and the Korean War produced these findings, which appear online in the journal *Depression and Anxiety*. "Among the older Veterans we studied, those with Purple Heart citations had half the mortality rate of those without Purple Heart citations," said lead author Tim Kimbrell, MD, a physician-researcher with the Center for Mental Health and Outcomes Research.

Whether the Purple Heart holders had chronic PTSD or not, they were about twice as likely to still be alive after some 10 years of follow-up, compared with those with no Purple Heart and no PTSD. The study included Veterans who were 65 or older in the late 1990s. It tracked their survival through 2008.

It is estimated that more than a million service members received a Purple Heart in World War II, and nearly 119,000 in the Korean War. In recent years, researchers with VA and the Department of Defense have sought insight into the psychological and neurobiological factors that enable some service members to not develop PTSD after traumatic events. The authors of the new VA study say Purple Heart holders who survive long past their war experience without PTSD may be the ideal population on which to focus such research. "Our theory was that there are many factors that contribute to resilience to PTSD, and these same factors may increase survival," said Kimbrell.

The researchers were surprised to find that among Purple Heart recipients, those with PTSD had slightly lower mortality than those without PTSD. This is a contradiction to several studies that have shown a link between chronic stress conditions such as PTSD and worse survival. Kimbrell and colleagues suggest this finding is due to what they term "early attrition." Those who had been physically injured in World War II or Korea and suffered PTSD may have been less likely to survive until age 65 in the first place; the PTSD-Purple Heart group included in their study may have been an exceptionally healthy and hearty cohort of Veterans.

The researchers say further studies involving these Veterans, as well as those who were wounded in combat but did not develop PTSD, may lead to new insights to help prepare future service members to cope with the stress and trauma of war. [Source: <http://www.research.va.gov>]



DOD Issues Purple Heart Standards for Brain Injury

U.S. service members have long been eligible to receive the Purple Heart medal for the signature wounds of the current wars – mild traumatic brain injuries and concussions – but now there is more clarity on how medical criteria for the award are applied, Defense Department officials said.

The criteria for the Purple Heart award state that the injury must have been caused by enemy action or in action against the enemy and has to be of a degree requiring treatment by a medical officer.

But it may be difficult to determine when a mild traumatic brain injury or a concussive injury that does not result in a loss of consciousness is severe enough to require treatment by a medical officer. "This is why we created this baseline standard," DOD spokeswoman Eileen Lainez said.

DOD allows the award of the Purple Heart even if a service member was not treated by a medical officer, as long as a medical officer certifies that the injury would have required treatment by a medical officer had one been available.

DOD officials said that as the science of traumatic brain injuries becomes better understood, guidance for award of the medal will evolve. [Source: Jim Garamone, *American Forces Press Service*]

News Briefs Cont.

Citizens Medal Nomination

Roger Elliott, veteran of two wars and friend and advocate of veterans, was recently nominated for the Presidential Citizens Medal. This Medal is among the highest honors a civilian can receive, and anyone who has served with Roger in the military, the Vietnam Veterans of America, or any of the many community groups he supports and organizations he belongs to, are not surprised at the nomination.

For over 40 years, the Presidential Citizens Medal has recognized Americans who have "performed exemplary deeds of service for their county, or their fellow citizens." Past recipients have included some of American's most respected public figures – but also everyday heroes – united by an unwavering commitment to service.

Congratulations to Roger for his nomination!



*Roger Elliott at the
Iowa Vietnam Memorial*

County News Briefs

Polk County

The Greater Des Moines Community Band played a rousing selection of patriotic tunes at the 2011 Memorial Day Remembrance Concert at the State Capitol grounds.



Jones County

Susan Yario from Jones County reports that Donald Cain, Onslow, Iowa has a nice display of over 50 flags in his yard. Thanks for your glorious show of patriotism, Don!



Linn County

Don Tyne, County VA director in Linn County reports that the Linn County office is finally moving into a new permanent location. The former Linn County VA was destroyed in the historical 2008 flood and had been operating in temporary office space at Westdal Mall. Their new office move will take place August 23-24, 2011.

The new address will be: 1240 26th Avenue Court SW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404. Phone number and email address will remain the same.

Scott County

Honor Flight of the Quad Cities will be flying out on September 22nd and November 3rd 2011. There are currently about 200 WWII Veterans waiting to go. These are numbers 16 and 17 for their Honor Flight Hub.

Also in Scott County, Davenport dedicated a Veterans Park on the Mississippi River this summer. Guest speaker for the dedication was Command Sgt. Maj. Blake from the Rock Island Arsenal. (Submitted by David Woods, Scott County)

County News Briefs Cont.

NACVSO 2011 National Conference

In June of 2011, the Annual National Conference for NACVSO was held at the IP Casino/Resort in Biloxi, Mississippi. Many of the VA directors/Administrators from Iowa attended. Most of Iowa's attendance was for the CEU training; however there were a few attendees that were there to receive their accreditation that is required by Iowa Code.



that the Gulf Coast offered in seafood. Some even tried oysters on the half shell for the first time.

The training was very diverse in the different areas of Veterans Affairs. There was a session on special monthly compensation and the different ratings of SMC. Another session con-

Iowa was well represented and is also now the second largest voting unit behind Ohio for NACVSO. Bennie Spain from Black Hawk County was elected to the Executive Board for NACVSO.

centrated on appeals. We received updates from some of the national service organizations as well as attended the business meeting for NACVSO.

Iowa was welcomed to the Mississippi Gulf Coast with open arms and many in attendance tried different things

Next year the National Conference for NACVSO is in Atlantic City, New Jersey from June 2-9th, 2012. (Submitted by Sara Creamer, Muscatine County)

Iowa County VA Administrator Featured in *Muscatine Journal*

Our very own Sara Creamer, Administrator in the Muscatine County's VA office was recently featured in the *Muscatine Journal*. Every Monday, the paper profiles a local figure who responds to questions provided by one of their reporters. Read the article here:

http://www.muscatinejournal.com/news/local/article_12a5acba-c6d8-11e0-b074-001cc4c03286.html

Purple Heart Honor Flight

The Honor Flight "Winnebago" (HFW) will fly again! The next flight to Washington D.C. is scheduled for August 2012. Priority will be given to WWII veterans and Combat Wounded veterans. All Purple Heart veterans are also eligible. The flight will leave Mason City about 7 a.m. and return about 10:30 p.m. via a SunCountry 737-800 plane.

"HFW" has flown 7 times to D.C. — with 602 WWII veterans participating. The August 2012 flight will take any remaining WWII veterans (meeting medical requirements) and approximately 130 Purple Heart recipients from their 8-county area of responsibility. (These counties include: 1-Winnebago, 2-Hancock, 3-Franklin, 4-Cerro Gordo, 5-Worth, 6-Mitchell, 7-Floyd, and 8-Chickasaw, plus southern Minnesota bordering 1, 5, and 6.) All applications must be accompanied by a DD214. There will be no requirement for guardians as Purple Heart vets will support any other veteran needing assistance. This will also ensure a maximum number of priority veterans.

The schedule will include a tour of the WWII monument with a short program, lunch, a tour of the Korean and Vietnam monuments with a program at each, a city tour, then on to Arlington National Cemetery for the Changing of the Guard. The final stop will be at the Iwo Jima Memorial with a program, and including the Marine Corps band, the silent drill team, and a General Officer as guest speaker.

WWII and Purple Heart veterans will travel at no cost. However, the total cost for the trip will still be about \$80,000. Any individual, group, or business willing to make a donation should contact Nancy Rockman (641.530.5081). For applications, contact Jack Caputo (641.590.0548), Dave Theiss (641.529.1776), or Bob Havner (507.259.5218).

In all probability, this will be the last Honor Flight Winnebago. Help support our WWII and Combat Wounded Veterans!

County News Briefs Cont

2011 Governor's Volunteer Awards

The Governor's Volunteer Awards (GVA) program was created in 1982, with inaugural awards presented in 1983. The program has grown from a small program — only available to state agencies to its present function of providing all Iowa nonprofit, charitable, and government organizations with a “non-competitive” way to honor local volunteers with a prestigious state-level recognition award.

Volunteers may be selected for an award in one of several categories: Individual; Group; Disaster Volunteer; or Length of Service. Each summer, regional award presentation ceremonies are held across the state to recognize hundreds of volunteers for their commitment, service, and time.

The following individuals, who together have logged in thousands of volunteer hours for their communities and local veterans, received the awards during ceremonies hosted by Governor Branstad and/or Lt. Governor Reynolds. Iowa veterans and citizens are immensely grateful for the volunteer services you provide. Thank you! (Not pictured: David Theiss, Waterloo)



*Donald Aamodt,
Lake Mills*



*Bob Allen,
Ames*



*Orville Barbee,
Grimes*



*Brad Alan Evenson,
Lake Mills*



*Robert Havner,
Charles City*



*Wayne Johns,
Forest City*



*Dennis Richardson,
Des Moines*



*Nancy Rockman,
Mason City*

Chickasaw County

A Medal of Honor recipient has recently been discovered buried in Fredericksburg, Iowa in an unmarked grave.

LeRoy H. Volkes (11-2-1849 - unknown) was an American soldier in the U.S. Army who served with the 3rd U.S. Cavalry during the Indian Wars. He took part in a number of campaigns against the Plains Indians during the early 1870s. He was one of four men who received the Medal of Honor for “Gallantry in Action” against hostile Indians at the Loupe Fork of the Platte River in Nebraska on April 26 1872. Other recipients of the medal included civilian scout William F. “Buffalo Bill” Cody (born in the Iowa Territory).

Chickasaw County has applied to the Medal of Honor Society for a military marker for his grave; the VA is now doing a search to confirm his status. Once the stone is approved and in place, military rites will be performed by AMVET Post 90 in Fredericksburg. (Submitted by Dave Jacobsen, Chickasaw County VA Director)

Snapshots from the Veterans Parade at the 2011 Iowa State Fair



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